

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02

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FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

TO RUEHCGOSECSTATE WASHDC 4345

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEYBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

S E C R E T NIAMEY 3289

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PINS, PINR, LY, NG

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT KOUNTCHE'S COMMENTS ON QADHAFI AND ENTEBBE AFFAIR

1. DURING FAREWELL CALL ON PRESIDENT KOUNTCHE MORNING JULY 16, SUBJECT OF QADHAFI'S RECENT ACTIVITIES CAME UP AND THIS LED TO PRESIDENTIAL OBSERVATION ON QADHAFI AND THE ENTEBBE AFFAIR.

2. KOUNTCHE SAID HE HAD JUST READ PRESS REPORT ON QADHAFI'S RECENT FAILURES TO SUBVERT VARIOUS AFRICAN STATES AND HIS SETBACKS IN SUDAN, TUNISIA, EGYPT AND UGANDA AND SUGGESTING THAT QADHAFI'S HUMILIATION PLUS SENSE OF FRUSTRATION OVER THESE FAILURES MIGHT LEAD HIM TO STAGE AND/OR FINANCE AN EVEN MORE SPECTACULAR SUBVERSIVE OR TERRORIST COUP.

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COMMENT: THIS NEWS REPORT APPEARED IN JULY 16 ISSUE

OF LE SAHEL WHICH QUOTED ARTICLE IN TEL AVIVI HAARETZ
FROM ITS WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT. ARTICLE IS INTERESTING
PARALLEL TO TRIPOLI 942. END COMMENT.

3. KOUNTCHE SAID THAT FROM WHAT HE KNOWS ABOUT QADHAFI
THIS SEEMS LIKE A VALID ASSESSMENT AND LATTER IS UNDOUBTEDLY
UP TO SOME NEW SCHEME. AS SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN TARGET OF
QADHAFI'S SUBVERSIVE EFFORTS, KOUNTCHE SAID ONLY THING TO
DO WAS TO BATTEN DOWN THE HATCHES AND BE AS VIGILANT AS
POSSIBLE. COMMENT: SECURITY AT AIRPORT AND BORDER
CROSSCNGS HAS BEEN TIGHTENED UP AND BOTH INCOMING AND
OUTGOING PASSENGER LUGGAGE IS BEING THOROUGHLY CHECKED BY
MKLITARY PERSONNEL. END COMMENT.

4. IN ANSWER TO MY QUESTION FOR HIS VIEWS AS MILITARY OFFICER
OF ISRAELI OPERATION ON ENTEBBE, KOUNTCHE SAID ONE HAD TO TAKE
ONE'S HAT OFF TO THE ISRAELIS. HE WAS PARTICULARLY IMPRESXED
BY THE FACT THAT THE ISRAELIS HAD THE WILL TO TAKE SUCH A
DECISION--ITS EXECUTION WAS OF COURSE ALSO VERY IMPRESSIVE.
FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, THE ISRAELIS
HAD UNDOUBTEDLY VIOLATED UGANDA'S TERITORIALINTEGRITY BUT
EVEN HERE THERE WERE MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES. I REFERRED TO
REPORTS THAT IDI AMIN HAD COLLABORATED WITH THE HIGHJACKERS AND
KOUNTCHE FIRMLY AGREED SAYING THAT IS WAS IN AMIN'S CHARACTER TO
DO SO ANDHE HAD NO DOUBT OF UGANDAN LEADER'S COMPLICITY.OEHECF
LSC

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